

If I retire at 60 with 16 years of service will I be able to continue my Fed Health plan?

If you are eligible for an immediate annuity, are enrolled in FEHB on date of retirement and have been covered by FEHB, under your own enrollment, or as a family member under another federal enrollment or under Tricare or Tricare-for-life for the five years of service immediately preceding retirement, then you will be eligible to continue your FEHB into retirement.

My husband who was a Federal employee retired 3 years ago who held our health insurance. I now carry health ins, do I need to have it 5 years prior to retirement in order to have in retirement?

No, you do not need your own enrollment for five years prior to retirement. You must have been covered by your own plan OR as a family member under another federal plan for the five years of service immediately preceding retirement.

When you say that seasonal work does not count toward retirement, can I assume that excludes what we are calling "full time seasonals" which is the new term for subject to furlough employees?

Yes, unless the appointment is excluded from FERS retirement coverage, an employee subject to furlough will receive credit for time worked and up to 6 months of credit per calendar year for the "furlough" or LWOP periods.

Temporary employees serving under appointments (other than provisional appointment) of 1 year or less are excluded from FERS retirement coverage. (CSRS and FERS Retirement Handbook, Chapter 10, Section 10A1.3-5.)

Seasonal employment which is excluded from FERS retirement contributions after 1988 (non-deduction service) will not be credited toward your retirement.

For a TSP distribution, what is the minimum monthly payment I can take? (just to start that process)

Minimum monthly withdrawal is \$25.00 per month.

Is there a difference in benefits when retiring at 60 with 29 years of service vs 60 with 30 years of service

The basic (Non LEO or FF) FERS annuity benefit for someone under age 62 is 1% of the high-3 average salary for each year of service.

- *Retirement benefit at age 60 with 29 years of service is 29% of the high-3 average salary.*
- *Retirement benefit at age 60 with 30 years of service is 30% of the high-3 average salary.*

- Retirement benefit at age 60 with 29 years and 11 months of service is 29 and 11/12 % of the high-3 average salary. Thus, once eligibility is attained, there is no magic to the full 30 years versus 29 years and 11 months. The difference between 29 years and 11 months and 30 years is 1/12 of 1%.

The basic (Non LEO or FF) FERS annuity benefit for someone age 62 or older with 20 or more years of service and sickleave is 1.1% of the high-3 average salary for each year of service.

- Retirement benefit at age 62 with 29 years of service is 31.9% of the high-3 average salary.
- Retirement benefit at age 62 with 30 years of service is 33% of the high-3 average salary.
- Retirement benefit at age 62 with 29 years and 11 months of service is 32.91 % of the high-3

I started work in 1999, my FERS Retirement deduction was 1.05% and went up to 1.2%, why? It is now 0.8%

Balanced Budget Act of 1997 temporarily increased retirement contributions for both CSRS employees and FERS employees from 1999 through 2002. The rate for regular (non-LEO and non-FF) employees increased as follows:

<u>Period</u>	<u>CSRS</u>	<u>FERS</u>
1999	7.25%	1.05%
2000	7.40%	1.20%
2001-02	7.50%	1.30%

When you state that you must have health benefits five years prior to retirement in order to continue health benefits into retirement, does that mean for a continuous five years or within five years ?

You must have been continuously covered by your own FEHB plan or as a family member under another FEHB plan for the full five years of service immediately prior to retirement.

I worked for the State of Ohio for about 2 years. Does this State count towards Federal retirement?

No, service with a state government is not creditable toward your federal retirement benefit.

I am retiring at the end of May 2016, I have 21 days of sick leave. Should I take the sick leave before I retire? I am 63 with 17 years of service.

Your unused sick leave will be added to your service in calculating the dollar amount of your retirement benefit.

If I retire on December 31 will I get my use or lose well as well as my other annual leave as a lump sum. How can I calculate the \$ value of this leave?

If you retire on December 31, you will be paid the amount of annual leave you had carried over from the previous year, plus the annual leave that you have earned as of the date of retirement. This will be paid at the salary rate in effect on date of retirement. The number of hours of annual leave is projected forward from date of retirement and increased by any statutory pay adjustment effective within that time frame.

I began with the govt. in the Pathways program as a student. My SF-50 from that time shows 2-FICA in the retirement block. Does this count towards retirement?

This is "non-deduction service" as no FERS deductions were withheld from your salary during this time.

- *Non-deduction service after 1988 is not creditable toward FERS retirement.*
- *Non-deduction service prior to 1989 is creditable toward FERS retirement if a deposit of 1.3% of the salary earned during the service, plus interest, is paid into the retirement system. Submit SF3108 to OPM to make payment for pre-1989 non-deduction service.*

Employee express says my scd for retirement is 6/9/1994 but my HR rep says it is 4/11/99..confused?

Please contact your HR Office to discuss discrepancies in your SCD.

Service 1978-1980; then break/CSRS refund; then service and CSRS payments 1981-2016= Should I redeposit CSRS contributions for the 1978-1980 CSRS payments?

You have the option to make a redeposit into the CSRS retirement system for this refund. The redeposit is the amount of the refund, plus 3% interest.

- *If this redeposit is paid, you will receive full credit for the service with no reduction.*
- *If the redeposit is not paid, you will receive credit for the service, but your annual retirement benefit will be reduced based upon age factors. The reduction is amount of redeposit due divided by the age factor shown on page 33 of the CSRS section of your seminar workbook.*

Does time taken off under FMLA count against your SCD? For example, if I took 3 months under FMLA two times, would that modify my SCD by 6 months?

No, LWOP for civilian service is fully creditable toward your retirement for up to 6 months per calendar year. Three months of LWOP used under FMLA will not affect your SCD.

My retirement estimate did not reflect the redeposit I made years ago for seasonal work prior to 1989. Do I need to contact OPM or should the benefits counselor do this?

The retirement estimate that your HR office provides is based upon information in your Official Personnel Folder (OPF). This deposit was paid directly to OPM and does not necessarily become part of your OPF. If you have a copy of the paid in full receipt from OPM on your CSD (Civil Service Deposit) account, you may provide a copy of this to HR to include in your OPF. This will not create any problems at retirement as you will provide information in Section F of the FERS retirement application regarding this payment and OPM will pull necessary files from their records. See excerpt of SF 3107 beginning on page 66 of the FERS section of your seminar workbook.

If a SF50 is missing from my eOPF, do I contact my current agency HR office or the agency that did not upload the SF50 13 years ago?

Contact your current agency HR office for any discrepancies or omissions from your OPF. Depending upon the nature of the SF 50, it may not be necessary to track down a 13 year old SF 50. If this is simply a pay adjustment, and is not part of the high-3 average salary, it is not necessary for case processing.

How long before a person retires should they send in their paperwork?

Most agencies request 3 months preparation time on this. Please check in with your HR office about 3 months prior to retirement for guidance on this.

I am hearing that retirement pay is coming many months after retirement due to a backlog at OPM. do you know what the average wait time currently is?

Please refer to the following website for current case processing times. Keep in mind these time frames are based upon when OPM receives the case, not your retirement date.

<https://www.opm.gov/about-us/budget-performance/strategic-plans/retirement-processing-status.pdf>

As I understand it, sick leave hours accrued count towards time served, and we get paid for it as well when we retire?

Hours of unused sick leave are added to your service time in calculating the dollar amount of your retirement benefit. You are not paid for your sick leave at retirement. You will receive a lump sum payment by your agency for your annual leave from your agency shortly after retirement.

My HR rep shows my SCD as 7-17-98 but Employee Express says it is 6-9-94..confused?

Please contact your HR Office to discuss discrepancies in your SCD.

As a FERS employee looking to maximize the annual leave lump sum payment, could I plan my separation date for the last day of the end of the leave year, for example this year it was January 9, 2016.

If you had separated on January 9, 2016, you could have earned 208 hours of annual leave (26 pay periods) on top of 240 carried over from previous year, but your annuity would not begin until February 1.

By retiring December 31, or January 1, 2 or 3 if CSRS, you could earn 200 hours of annual leave (25 pay periods) and earn retirement benefit for the month of January.

For sick leave computation-how many hours are in a month?

169 – 174 hours equals one month. See page 15 on CSRS section or page 8 in FERS section of the seminar workbook.

Did I understand correctly that the AL lump sum is taxed in the year received, not the year earned (if you retire at the end of the preceding year)?

Yes, annual leave is subject to income tax and Social Security tax (if FERS or CSRS Offset) in the year that it is received.

Is the leave pay based on the hourly rate shown on the LES?

Annual leave is paid at the salary rate, shown on your SF 50. The number of hours of annual leave is projected forward and will be increased by any statutory pay adjustments effective within that time frame projected.

I am CSRS Offset, and when I came back it was as a temp (6 months) that converted to perm. During the 6 months I was FICA only - how does this impact my SCD?

Post 9/30/82 non-deduction service (FICA only) is not creditable toward CSRS retirement benefit unless a deposit is paid into the retirement system. It is creditable toward SCD for LEAVE, but not creditable toward SCD for RETIREMENT unless deposit is paid.

I'm a permanent seasonal w/ varying furlough of 2 wk to a month. Is high 3 based on my step and grade, or actual wages earned with furlough?

Furlough time is treated as leave without pay (LWOP) and is fully creditable for time and salary for up to 6 months per calendar year. Average salary is calculated as though you had been working the entire period.

Can you provide details of the government pension offset and the windfall elimination or annuity reduction with social security for CSRS

Details provided in the Social Security section of the seminar workbook and lecture.

What happens if you have a terminal illness and you're a CSRS retiree?

A CSRS employee preparing for retirement with a terminal illness may elect a full survivor benefit for his /her spouse, elect the "Alternative Form of Annuity", receive a refund of CSRS contributions in the retirement fund and take a small reduction in annuity. Taking this refund does not affect the amount of survivor benefit payable to the spouse

A married CSRS retiree may change his/her survivor election to full benefit within 18 months of retirement.

Do STAR awards or Performance Awards count towards your income for your high 3 years of income?

No, awards and bonuses are not included in average salary calculation.

What tax and other deductions can be anticipated against all income streams?

Income tax, retirement contributions (FERS or CSRS, Social Security tax, Medicare tax, TSP contribution, FEHB premiums, FEGLI premiums and LTC premiums may be withheld from your salary.

Income tax, FEHB premiums, FEGLI premiums and LTC premiums may be withheld from your retirement income.

Please explain retirement supplement ie interim payment 80% of basic benefit w/o supplement.

Interim payments paid by OPM while processing retirement are approximately 80% of the FERS basic benefit. Interim payments do NOT include the retiree annuity supplement. The retiree supplement will be paid retroactively after the retirement case has been finalized.

If I understand correctly, the phased retirement could get one from 60 to 62 to get the 1.1% calculation.

Yes, the fully retired phased component of the annuity will be calculated using the 1.1% annuity factor if age 62 when fully retired.

To confirm, the high 3 is based on annual salary, not the actual amount earned--the amount recorded in our social security reports?

Correct. Average salary is based upon salary rate, including locality pay, weighted by the amount of time each salary rate was in effect. The amount recorded in your Social Security report is not an accurate measure of average salary as it may include overtime and bonuses and other non-federal income.

In reference to the FERS Supplement, how is the Earnings Limitations dollar amount calculated each year?

The FERS retiree supplement is subject to the same earnings limitation as are Social Security recipients under full benefit age. The 2016 earning limitation is \$15,720. This number is published each year by the Social Security Administration.

Do you apply for the SS Supplement through SSA?

The retiree annuity supplement is automatically paid by OPM along with your FERS basic benefit. You do not need to "apply" for this.

Do I understand correctly that if I predecease my spouse, the only way they can continue receiving FEHB is if they're receiving a survivor annuity?

Correct. For your non-federal spouse to continue FEHB upon your death as a retiree, there must be a self and family or self plus one FEHB plan in place on date of your death AND he/she must be eligible for a survivor annuity.

Are you saying that my spouse will not have health insurance under FEHB once I, the federal employee, pass?

If the non-federal spouse of a retiree is not eligible for a survivor annuity upon the death of the retiree, the self and family or self plus one FEHB plan terminates.

Upon the death of an active employee, with at least 10 years of service, the surviving spouse is automatically eligible for a survivor annuity and would continue FEHB provided he /she were covered by a self and family or self plus one plan on date of death of the employee.

When I started government employment 18 years ago as a GS-4, I waived life insurance. Am I able to enroll in life insurance now? Where can I get detailed information?

You may enroll in FEGLI Basic, Option A and Option B by providing Evidence of Insurability (good health).

See SF 2817 and SF 2822 for additional information and to request insurance. These forms are available on opm.gov. Go to Retirement. Go to Publications and Forms. Go to Standard Forms.

Am I able to flip what I paid into FEGLI as an annuity paid to myself at retirement, as some commercial LI plans offer?

No. FEGLI insurance is term insurance. There is no cash value to FEGLI Insurance.

Can you opt out of Medicare B, after paying premiums for a few years?

You can cancel Medicare Part B at any time. You may re-enroll during any general enrollment period, January through March of each year. There will be a 10% penalty added to your premium for each year you were not enrolled in Medicare Part B.

What proof is needed that you were covered for health bene by ex-spouse federal employee?

Provide copies of the SF 2801, FEHB registration form showing you as a family member covered during the five year period prior to retirement.

Can you please go over the part where you are on your spouse insurance Tri Care Prime. Did you say that you should enroll in health care and then suspend it after retirement. (Example retiring 2016)

If currently covered by Tricare, if you were to enroll in FEHB during the open season prior to retirement, and then retire after the effective date of the FEHB coverage (after January 8, 2017), the Tricare would count toward the 5 years insurance coverage requirement to continue FEHB into retirement. After retirement, you could “suspend” your FEHB coverage and choose to use Tricare. If, at some later date, you would like to use FEHB coverage again, you may reenroll in FEHB during an open season. For additional information, see Frequently Asked Questions on OPM website by searching the words “Tricare and FEHB”.

When I turned 65 I enrolled in Part A and my understanding was that if I decided to enroll in Part B I could wait until 3 months before I retire. is it 8 months or 3 months?

If you retire after age 65, you may enroll in Part B with no penalty during the 8 month period immediately following your retirement.

Can you elect to drop basic life insurance after retirement?

Yes, you may cancel Basic life insurance at any time. The government is paying 1/3 of the premium for your basic life insurance. You may continue your Basic life insurance into retirement if you have had the basic life insurance in place for 5 years prior to retirement. If you choose the 75% reduction election, you will pay premiums until age 65. You no longer pay premiums for Basic life insurance in retirement after age 65. The value of the insurance would reduce by 2% per month until it reaches 25% of the original value, which is then free for the rest of your life.

Once retired are health premium locked in or do they go up in cost?

Retirees pay the same premiums for FEHB as do employees. Retirees pay on a post-tax basis. As premiums increase for employees, premiums for retirees will also increase. Retirees may change FEHB plans during annual open seasons or upon specific qualifying events.

I had option B for 27 years. Last year I stopped that and kept Basic and the \$10,000. Could I start it back up and still receive when I retire say next year?

No, if you were to reenroll in Option B, you could not continue it into retirement next year as you must have been covered by the option B for the full five years of service immediately preceding your retirement. (You may find private insurance less expensive than the Option B insurance if you are over age 50.)

Adult children are eligible to buy LTC? Must this be during an open season?

Your adult children can enroll in the Federal LTC program outside of an open season, but must undergo full underwriting to qualify.

Can you sign up for long term insurance after you retire during open season?

No, retirees are not eligible to participate in LTC Open Seasons.

Whoa...do all private LTC plans have the war exclusion?

I am not sure, but would not be surprised. Both of the private plans that I reviewed had war exclusions.

Any suggestions for Long Term Care for someone with a chronic disease?

Suggest you Contact LTC Partners on 1-800 582-3337 (1-800-LTC-FEDS) to discuss specific medical conditions. They are very knowledgeable and very helpful.

Having watched my mother-in-law go through assisted living and nursing home care, I am a BIG believer in LTC insurance. She had it, and it made all the difference for our family.

Thanks for the comment!

How does phased retirement affect the high 3 calculation for the amount of annuity?

Upon full retirement after a period of phased retirement, you receive 50% of the original retirement benefit, the "phased retirement component" and 50% of the new retirement, the "fully retired phased component". Salary increases during the phased retirement are included in the "fully retired phased component".

Are there HR Specialist that can "sit" with employee & go over all of this one on one?

Check with your HR office to schedule time to meet with someone to review your service history and retirement estimates.

Still working at 65 will they stop taking FLEGLI out of my paycheck with the Basic Plan?

No. You always pay premiums as an employee, and you retain the full value of the insurance as an employee. After retirement, you do not pay premiums on Basic insurance beginning at age 65. The value of the basic life Insurance will reduce based upon the "Post-Retirement Reduction Election" that you select at retirement.

Can you withdraw funds solely from the Roth portion of your TSP if you need that money for a house down payment, post-retirement, and don't want to pay taxes on such a large lump sum?

No, if you have both Traditional and Roth TSP accounts, all withdrawals are taken proportionately from each account.

Are you subject to the withdrawal penalty if you receive disability retirement before age 55?

The 10% early withdrawal penalty may be waived if the payment is made as a result of “total and permanent disability”.

The CSRS disability retirement and the FERS disability retirement does not certify “total and permanent disability. The TSP cannot certify to the IRS that you meet this exemption requirement when your taxes are reported. Therefore, you must provide the justification to the IRS when you file your taxes.

Can you withdraw monthly payments from different portions of your TSP account... ie., use your Roth portion before you start tapping your traditional portion?

No, if you have both Traditional and Roth TSP accounts, all withdrawals are taken proportionately from each account.

See TSP publication # 536, Important Tax Information About Payments From Your TSP Account, for detailed information on withdrawal options.

If I work part time after I retire at age 65 with full benefits, am I still eligible for benefits?

Post-retirement earnings will not affect your CSRS Benefit or your FERS Basic Benefit. Your Social Security benefits are subject to an earnings limitation until you reach your full benefit age. If wages and net self-employment exceed the earnings limitation, then the Social Security benefit is reduced.

*For years before the year that you attain full benefit age, the 2016 earnings limitation is \$15,720
The Social Security benefit is reduced \$1 for every \$2 earned above the limit.*

For the year that you attain full benefit age, the 2016 earnings limitation is \$41,880 and the Social Security benefit is reduced \$1 for every \$3 earned above the limit.

There are no earnings limitations after you reach your full benefit age.

I have contributed to SS as a part-time private sector employee during my Federal/CSRS career. If the part-time work = 40 SS credits, would I be eligible to collect SS and CSRS when I retire?

Yes, you may collect Social Security benefits in addition to your CSRS retirement benefit. If you have less than 30 years of “substantial earnings” in Social Security, then your Social Security is subject to the Windfall Benefits Elimination Provision, which is a reduced benefit formula. This will not affect your CSRS retirement benefit unless you did not pay your post-56 military deposit.

As a CSRS retiree, would I be eligible to receive my husband’s SS survivor benefits if he passes away before me?

That would depend upon the amount of your CSRS retirement benefit. The Social Security survivor benefit is reduced by \$2.00 for every \$3.00 of your CSRS retirement benefit (Government Pension Offset Provision).

So SS and Medicare is not taken out of annuity?

Correct. Social Security taxes and Medicare taxes are employment taxes. They are not withheld from your retirement.

My husband (66) receives SS. Should I receive auxiliary benefits while I work? If so, must I apply?

Before the year in which you reach your full benefit age (65-67), you are subject to an earnings limitation of \$15,720 (2016). If you earn above this amount, the auxiliary benefits are reduced by \$2.00 for every \$3.00 in earnings that exceed the \$15,720 limit.

If you are over age 66, you may receive auxiliary benefits (spousal benefits) based on your husband’s Social Security Benefit and delay your own Social Security to age 70 to earn Delayed Retirement Credits.

If you are employed in CSRS, and age 66 or older, you may receive auxiliary benefits based on our husband’s Social Security until you retire. When you retire from CSRS, however, the auxiliary benefits are reduced by \$2.00 for every \$3.00 of your CSRS retirement benefit.

On the restricted application.....If my spouse is 66 (born in '49), can he apply for the restricted benefit when I (born in '54) apply for social security?

Yes. If you were to apply for your Social Security benefit at age 62, your 67 spouse could collect a spousal benefit based upon your Social Security earnings records and delay his / her earned Social Security benefit to age 70 to collect Delayed Retirement Credits.

My SS form of 2016 only indicates my spouse get benefits as a survivor but does she get 1/2 my amount while I'm still alive?

Your spouse is eligible for spousal benefit based upon your Social Security earnings records equal to 50% of your Primary Insurance Amount, which is your full benefit age amount. However, this is reduced dollar for dollar by his/her own earned Social Security benefit (Dual Entitlement Provision) and reduced \$2.00 for every \$3.00 of his/her own earned CSRS retirement benefit (Government Pension Offset Provision).

What happens upon my death if there's money left in my TSP account?

Upon the death of a TSP participant, the balance of the TSP account will be paid in the following order:

- *to the Designated Beneficiary,*
- *If none, to the widow or widower,*
- *If none, to the child or children,*
- *If none, to the parents,*
- *If none, to the executor or administrator of the estate,*
- *If none, to the next of kin.*

After I've selected monthly payments & made a 1-time withdrawal, can I then decide to leave TSP & roll my balance into an IRA, which, unlike TSP, would allow a withdraw the funds?

Yes. You may make a one-time partial withdrawal and at the same time or at a later date select monthly payments from the balance of your TSP account. You may change the monthly payment to a final single payment which can be transferred directly into an IRA.